

THE  
NEW COMMAND  
RENEW'D:

OR,

*Love one another.*

Being

An endeavour after the *unitie* of  
the Spirit in the bond of Peace,  
by several *Uniting Principles*.

Among which there are *ten Rules*  
for a right understanding of Scripture,  
very usefull for these divided times.

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BY

RALPH VENNING.

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Psal. 133. 1.

*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is,  
for brethren to dwell together in unitie.*

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**T O**  
**All who profess love**  
**to the**  
**L O R D J E S U S,**  
**and yet love not one another,**  
**according to his example**  
**and command.**

Beloved,

**I** Wish I could say of you as Paul did say of the  
Thessalonians, *1 Thess. 4. 9.* as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you, seeing ye your selves are taught of God to love one another. But alas! there's need, yea, ever more need, that I should write unto you of brotherly love; for, whereas there is among you envying and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnall, and walk as men? as taught of men, and not of God. *1 Thess. 4. 9.*

*1 Cor. 3. 3.*  
At quis ego tantis, tantillus ego? What am I to such an undertaking as this? many? the unworthiest of whom I am not worthy to follow) have gone before me, calling you to your calling, love one another. But do they not all say, who hath believed our report? to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Do not they all say, We have

\* And in  
the high  
places of  
the City.

have laboured in vain? We have come out of  
the chiefest places of conuenge, you in the ex-  
course of the chiefest, even in the Citie \* we  
have uttered our words, and our lips dropt sweet-  
ness; our voice was love, love; live in love. But  
no man regarded, all our counsels were set at  
naught.

Alas beloved! what hopes is there left for me  
to prevail? if Paul's, if Apollo's, if Christ's  
words have not taken with you, can mine expect to  
find acceptance? and yet me thinks I hope be-  
yond hope, because I know that God hath all  
hearts in his own hand, and can turn them when  
and by whom he pleaseth; therefore though many  
out of their abundance have cast in much, I hope  
my mite will not be rejected. I must confess I have  
for a great while forbore, lest I should be a re-  
proach and derision daily; but I am now over-  
come, and that by importunitie, not so much from  
without (which yet was much) as from within  
(which was more) for these words were within  
mine heart like a burning fire shut up, and I was  
weary with forbearing, I could not contain: For  
while I held my peace from this good, my heart was  
hot within me, and while I was musing the fire  
burnt, so that I could not but \* first speak with my  
tongue, and now with my pen.

\*The most  
of these  
heads  
were  
preacht  
at the  
Tower of  
London.

I said yea to my self and others, I often said,  
I was few of dayes: and therefore I was afraid  
and durst not shew forth mine opinion; I said,  
dayes should speak, and multitude of years should  
teach wisdom: but the spirit within me constrain-  
ed me, and I spake and must speak that I may  
be refreshed. My belly! (should I hold my  
peace at such a time as this) if this wine should  
not have vent, would be ready to burst like new  
bottles.

But



But let me not (I pray you) accept [not except] any mans person, neither let me give flattering Titles nor upbraiding Language unto any man; should I do so, my Maker would soon take me away. I know God will lay it to my charge.

Censures perhaps I may undergo, and I indeed expect it? but not from you: let the world scoff, I care not, having learnt to pass through their good report and bad. I am not ignorant in what a narrow way I walke, how it concerns me to be cautious, both what I speak, and how: for who would undertake to moderate the extreme immoderation of our dayes? and yet for my own part I am not solicitous (good meaning and innocency are carelesse, and seldome forethink what to say) my conscience, yea God himself bears me witness, that I would not write a Syllable which should give offence. Teach me thy way O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of those which observe me.

Psalme 27.  
11.

I would willingly blot out any expression which might be liable to suspicion: for truly (as Caesar said concerning his wife) it is not enough not to be in fault; but things relating to love, (as Caesars wife) should not be suspected to be in fault: I hope therefore if any thing do (seeing it is against my will if any thing do) escape me, which may seem to deviate from the scope, viz. love, that your love (for love of that which I write for and from, viz. love) will cover it with a charitable construction.

I have forbore to instance in any thing touching any part or parties, which might but occasion a prejudice against any of the principles. For as Solomon saith, he that recovereth a transgression seeketh love, but he that repeateth a matter separates

\* Not looking so much how they came in, as how we may get them out, as one said of originall sin.

\* The more excellent way.

rateth very friends, Prov. 17. 9. And we find it confirmed by experience, that such proceedings they do but (as Paul said of prophane and vain babblings) increase to more ungodlyness, and their words (2 Tim. 2. 16, 17.) will eat as doth a Gangrene, of whom is, &c. I would therefore, and I wish all would forget that which is behind, that which is past, viz. \* miscarriages arising from strife and envie; and press to that which is before, and yet to come. viz. \* Love among brethren. I have not in the least made it my studie or endeavour to dress the matter in any habit, but plain; and I will give you my reason, viz. I would not have words stay the Readers from attending the things. That eloquence offers injury to things, which draw us to observe it: seeing words are onely for the matters sake, and should be no other then would promote it.

Ottavius Augustus had a speciall care to express his mind and meaning most plainly, and reprehended Marcus Antonius for writing such things that men did rather wonder at, then understand.

Zeno was wont to say that he had two sorts of disciples, the one he called *λογιστας* who respected nothing more then language; these be liked not so well: the other he called *φιλοδους* curious to learn such words as are fit to express things by, and these were his darlings.

Me thinks the Apostles discourse in 1 Cor. 14. should silence all tinkling Cymbals; such as affect such words and phrases as rather tickle the itching ears of men, then affect their affections or leave any impression on the hearts and consciences.

For my own part, I acknowledge it my principle (and I would be loth my practice should give it

To the Readers.

it the lie) to speak to the lowest, and then I am sure the highest understand me; whereas should I (if at least I were able) speak to the highest, I should be to the lowest as a Barbarian. In short, I rather choose to speak shortly, though but five words, which may be to edifying, then to use tenne thousand, which when men hear or reade, they know not.

I had thought to have collected the severall heads, and have set them before you by themselves, but the whole Book being but little, will soon be run and read over: and therefore I shall spare you the labour of reading, my self of writing, and the Printer of Printing.

Thus my beloved friends, having given you a foresight of what I have done, why and how; and hoping that these things which are cast in by the way are not cast away: I shall say no more, but pray that it may come unto you with a fulness of blessing, and be instrumentall to unite your hearts in love; which will satisfie the desire, and fulfill the joy of him, who can joy in nothing, but in being the

Servant of Christ,

Ralph Venning.

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THE  
NEW COMMAND  
RENEWED.  
OR,  
Love one another.

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Part I.

**G**ods one and only design is, by the words of his mouth, and the works of his hands \* *1579*  
to bring forth his own \* Image in all Gen. 1. 27.  
times and dispensations; and that is oneness.  
When he created man, he made him in likeness and image of himself, one : yea, though he Gen 2. 24.  
created Male and Female, yet were they not two, but one flesh.

When this Image was defaced, and man continued not in his uprightness, *that is*, in his simplicitie and oneness : that which God aimed at in the restoration of man, was the reparation of his image oneness : that God and man might be one again. Yea, that in Christ all things in Heaven and Earth, which were fallen out with, and fallen away from man, upon his falling away from God, might be gathered together into one. Eph. 1: 10.

Yea, all the *disputations* and *divisions* which God hath left in the world, shall disappear and be no more, when once the Saints come in, or (*more emphatically*) into the unity of the faith.

*Εἰς τὴν ἑνότητα.*

Eph. 4. 13.

*Ἐπὶ σωτῆς*

so read

1 Cor. 16

18.

"He with-

out us is

not made

perfect.

That is (as I with submission conceive) when the *Jewes* and *Gentiles* the fulness of them shall be called in (and come to the knowledge) or rather the acknowledgement of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, \* or the man at age, and the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: Christ (I mean mysticall) is not yet a perfect man at age, is not yet in fulness: nor will be, till all his Members both *Jewes* and *Gentiles* are brought forth. Now when these shall be brought into the unity of faith, which is the acknowledgement of the Son of God, &c. then is Gods design of oneness accomplisht.

Ezek. 11.

19.

Now to the effecting hereof, God hath promised to bestow on his people one heart. Ezek. 11. 19. which is not onely in relation to their being new born, and so being one with God; but as the *Jewes* went with one heart to *Jerusalem*, that they might build the Temple, so in relation to this design of the unity of Faith, God will knit together the hearts of his people that they shall lie together like Doves to the windows: yea, and ere they are aware (I believe) they shall find their souls made like the Chariots of *Amminadab*, or a willing people. In a word, the top and consummation of all the happiness, which Christ prays for his, is [John

Isay 90. 8.

Cant. 6. 12

17. 21. That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. Indeed the glory of all our hereafter glory will be an oneness of communion with the

Father,

*Or, Love one another*

Father, Sonne, Spirit, and one another in God, who is one in all, and all in one.

But seeing that as yet there seems to be a breach, not onely between the *Jewes* and *Gentiles*, but between them who have attained to the knowledge and acknowledgement of the Son of God; I shall endeavour to bring the Saints to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, for there is but one Body, one Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Eph. 3.4. &c.

Now that we may walk together in one way, it is requisite that we be of one heart, and that which conduceth most herunto, is, that we be of one mind: for the more unity there is in judgement, the more there's like to be in affection (because likeness produceth liking) and the more oneness there is in affection, the more there will be in practice and conversation; the more union there is the more communion there will be and the better; the less union there is in judgement and affection, the less and worse will our Communion be.

And seeing we can hardly live together, unless we love together, or as the Prophet saith, (*Amos 3.3.*) Seeing we cannot walk together unless we be agreed, I shall (as God enables me) lay down some principles, which if read (as written,) without prejudice and partialitie, will not a little provoke & conduce to union and agreement.

*The first Principle.*

1 That we may meet to agree together, let us agree to meet together, and that's meet; for

\* Meetings  
are meet  
things.  
\* Be a-  
greed.

saith the *Prophet*, how can two walk together, unless they \* meet and come together? So I would reade that, which we reade, unless they \* agree together: meetings are the Porch or entry into agreements: And me thinks Christians should not be much intreated to treat together; surely 'tis to be feared, that they are loath to agree, who are loath to meet about an agreement.

*Object.*  
hindrance  
of meeting  
*Answer.*

*Ob.* But what makes the Saints so backward to meet about an agreement?

*Answer.* These three things.

- 1 Self-conceit:
- 2 Pride of heart.
- 3 Satans policie.

1 Selfcon-  
ceit.

*Matth.* 23.  
26.

Having  
exhorted  
to love,  
*Rom.* 12,  
10. he  
adds v. 16.  
Be not wise  
in your own  
conceits.

1 *A self-conceit* that each of them is in the right; every man hath a good opinion of his own opinion. Every man puts it off from himself, and instead of saying, as did the Disciples, (when Christ told them, one of you shall betray me) *Master, is it I?* most are ready to say, *Master, 'tis not I.* Most men in stead of confessing their blindness, aske like the scornfull Pharisee, are we blind? so loth are men to suspect their own defects. It was just so in the time of the division between the *Roman* and *Grecian* Churches, each justified themselves, and neither would acknowledge themselves, to be in the error. But Christians, hear a little; if you think your selves in the right, I hope you think so on good grounds, and not that you are in the right meerly by thinking so: now if your grounds be good upon which your conceits are built



baile, you need not be afraid, nay you may be encouraged to produce them with boldness. 'Tis to be suspected that they who refuse to bring forth their strong Arguments, have no strong Arguments to bring forth. Christ tells us, John 3. 21. that he that doth truth (and he that holds truth) cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

John 3.  
2. 1.

If mens Arguments be pure and good, they will not be the worse, but the more confirmed by being weighed, if they be found either base metall, or counterfeit, the discovery will ingage them to part with them, and to take their part no longer, lest they deceive their soul; in short, if they be good, they may do good, they may help others to see the light; if bad, 'twill be a mercy they were produced; for you are loofers while you follow darkness and lying vanities.

2 The second hindrance to a meeting about agreement is *Pride of heart*; Men are loath to be the first movers, lest they should be thought timorous and willing to yield, but beloved Christians, Christ Jesus did not so; God and we had never met, nor had been reconciled together, had not God come to us first. Though God were offended by us, and had thence just reason to be for ever offended with us, yet he sounds a truce and makes the first tender of agreement; shall we not walk as we have him for an example?

2 Let :  
pride of  
heart.

'Tis very observable, that while any one party is low, it pleads for moderation and reconciliation; but when it hath got the staff in its hand, it scarce minds, much less practises either. As Christians, the very Heathens will shame us; for Aristippus an Heathen, though elder then Aschines, who began the strife, sues first for peace:

## The new Command renewed :

shall we not be friends, said he to *Alexandrians*? *Christians*, I beseech you go to one another, and say as *Aristippus*, shall we not be friends? And oh that every one would answer as did *Alexandrians*, yes with all mine heart.

### 3 Satans policy.

3 A third hindrance to a meeting about an agreement is *Satans policy*; we may take up *Pauls* words when he writes to the *Thessalonians*, 1 *Thes.* 2. 18. we had come unto you once and again, but *Satan* hindered us. *Christians*, why do you not come one to another? why are ye not in your duty? 'tis to be feared, *Satan* stands in your way and stays you.

### 2 Principle, right understanding.

#### The second Principle.

2 Being met, labour for a right understanding, of each others mind: there is nothing makes men stand at such a far distance as a mis-understanding: 'tis with men now, as with the men at *Babel*, the languages are confounded, and they understand not one another.

### Three things beg of God.

1 The delivery of truth to you.

At your meetings, seeke God about these three things for a right understanding.

1 That God would be pleased by his own Spirit to declare and make clear his truth unto you; that he would make known to you, and make you to know what is his good, perfect and acceptable will, that so ye may walk before him in all well-pleasing.

2 The delivery of you to truth.

2 Intreat God, that he would deliver you to the truth, as well as deliver the truth to you; not onely that he would open his truth to your hearts, but also open your hearts to his truth, that so you may close with every truth, embracing and welcoming it as your joy, through it should

should open you to never so many reproaches in the world.

3 Instruct God to remove all obstacles, and to take that out of the way which stands in the way, and keeps you from understanding and owning truth.

3 Removal of obstacles.

Such as these.

1 Self-interest in holding any opinion; nothing more hinders men from going to, or going from an opinion, than the int'rest they have by holding it; men do not care so much for the opinions they hold, as for what they hold by their opinions. Many a man thinks ( *I am confident* ) what Demetrius said [ *Acts 19.2.7.* ] This craft, by which we have all our wealth, is like to be set at nought, and then we are like to come to nought.

1 Self-interest.

Hence they begin to flie in the face of truth, and oppose it with outrageous rage, so dearly sweet, and sweetly dear is their darling gain; They see they cannot have the Honey, unless they burn the Bees, and therefore fire them forthwith; they cannot possess the Vineyard, unless Naboth be put to death, and therefore he must be dispatched. When once the copyhold of gain and honour is touch'd, men begin to look about them, and will never call godliness gain, because gain is their godliness.

Beseech God therefore that you may be unselfed, and may lay down all your interest of gain and honour.

Let the truth of God be ten times dearer then tenths, or any income of gain and honour, which cometh in by any opinion, for ( *as some say* ) where

where gold grows, no Plant will prosper : so certainly no truth will be dear, nor have bearing, where the love of money or honour hath taken place.

2 Intreat God to keep you from *passionate discourses* and disputations : or from *passion* in *discourses* and disputations : For

The wrath  
of man  
worketh  
not the  
righteous-  
ness of  
God.

1 So much *passion* as there is, so much there is to no purpose ; yea to an ill purpose.

2 *Passion* usually ariseth more from and for self then *Christ*.

3 *Passion* hinders the efficacy of the argument ; for the singling of *passion* hinders the sound of truth :

4 *Passion* unfits a man for discourse, and confounds both memory and understanding : so that as *Aristotle* hath observed διὰ τὴν ὀργὴν ὁφθαλμοὶ τὸ ἀληθὲς κρύβουν ἢ δυνάμει, they that are in *passion* cannot discern nor judge of truth.

5 *Christ* loseth more by the *passion* then he gains by the disputation ; for while you seek to honour him, he finds himself to be dishonoured.

Δυσὸν λεγόντων διαίρει θυμωμένον, ὃ μὴ ἀντιτάσσον τοῖς λόγοις, σοφώτερον.

*When two dispute, and th'one begins to rage,  
The other not retorting is more sage.*

3 Preju-  
dice.

1 King. 22:

3 Intreat God to remove prejudices, for that doth very much prejudice the entertainment of truth. *Ahab* had such a prejudice against *Michaiab* that he would not call him *Prophet*, but [1 King 22. 8.] *Michaiab the son of Imlah*. There's one man, *Michaiab the son of Imlah*, but I hate him, for he never speaks good concerning me, but evil ;  
but

but as *Jeboſaphat* ſaid to *Ahab*, Let not the King ſay ſo : even ſo would I ſay to you, *Chriſtians*, let not *Chriſtians* ſay of one another, that is a rigid man, I will not hear him, or this is a *Seſſary*, I will not hear him. Beg of God, that prejudice may not hinder cloſing with truth.

*The third Principle.*

3 When God is ſought, and you begin to diſcourſe, deal faithfully as in the preſence of God, uſe not policy and ſophiſtry to vale the truth. Do not ye equivocate nor mince your meanings, hiding it under dubious terms, but propoſe all things clearly. Affect not novelty or nicety of Language, but ſpeake in known and familiar phraſes.

3 Principle, ſpeak plainly & clearly. Fit words are better then fine.

Many times there's ſuch adoe kept about terms, that before the diſcourſe be ended, men loſe themſelves and the queſtion too, therefore ſpeak plainly and not in Parables. \* It's no little vanity, to ſpeak ſuch words as will conſtrain you to uſe twenty, and ſometimes twenty times more, to explain what you meant.

How many 3000, words have theſe three words coſt.

*The fourth Principle.*

4 Be as willing to hear as to ſpeake ; a man ſhould hear twice as much as he ſhould ſpeak, and it ſeems to be intimated in his having two ears, but one tongue. Were there in times of diſcourſe more hearers and fewer ſpeakers, there would probably be eaſier & ſpeedier determinations: much talk binders obſervation, and keeps things from being weighed. A man ſhall meet with ſuch talkatives, as (like the beating of an unbrac'd

ὁμιλῶν. ὁμιλῶν. ὁμιλῶν. 4 Principle, hear much, ſay little.

*The new Command renewed:*

andrac'd drum I are able to beat some men one of their wits, at least their patience: they are so confusedly busie, and so busily confused.

*The fifth Principle.*

5 Principle weigh what is spoken.

\* Maldonate said of the explication of a place of Scripture, that it was most agreeable to ant quiry, but because Calvin had so interpreted it, he would chuse a new one. Phil. 4.5.

5 Weigh not who speaks, nor how it is spoken, but what is spoken: You should not overvalue, or undervalue a truth, because ye like or dislike the party or his manner of speaking. Sometimes (according to the Proverb) we dandle the child for love of the Nurse, and take up an opinion for his sake that brings it: \* and others refuse an opinion because such an one holds it.

But Christians, consider what you do; would a man take poyson, though from a Father, or or refuse a Cordiall though from an enemy? It was better said, *Amicus Plato, & Amicus Aristoteles, sed magis amica veritas.* And the Apostles rejoyced that Christ was preached, though they that preached him did it out of envie, and to add to his bonds. Go from any man to go to truth; but go from no truth to go to any man: As Christ said, the pollution is not from without, neither indeed (in this sense) the puritie: What is the word the better for being in Pauls mouth or the worse for being in Apollo's? What is the Heavenly treasure the worse for being brought in an earthen vessel? or the better when banded to us by an Angel? Is the word of wisdom, the better for the Wisdom of words? or is truth; the less beautiful, because naked and not arrayed with Sattin words and silken phrases? what though a man have neither silver nor gold to give you, is not Christ worth the receiving.

'Tis strange to see how men are led into, and led

led out of opinions merely by an opinion of the man. The *Philosopher* (though he were the same man and of the same mind) in his *squalid rags* could not find admission when *better robes* procur'd both an open door, and reverence. Boldness and readiness of speech with the most (though not with the most judicious) bears away the Bell. To go from *Aristotle*, though a man go to reason, is, or had wont to be no small disgrace in the schools.

If *Herod* speak, then it is the voice of God, and not of man; but if *Paul* speak, then 'tis what will this babler say? Some cannot hear, unless a *Doctor* preach; others will not hear if a *Doctor* preach. Surely *Christians*, these things ought not to be so; truth should be welcome to us, though the *Devil* the father of lies brought it to us; and nothing but truth, though an *Angel* from Heaven be the messenger.

#### The sixth Principle.

6 Let not custome bear sway for or against an opinion. Let not Antiquitie or Noveltie make you respect or disrespect a truth; favour truth for truths sake whether old or new. Though all truth be old \* yet our sight of truth may be new; why then should new light be a trouble to some, or tradition a burthen to others? why should *Divine*, or *Orthodox*, or *Orthodox Divine* grow out of date? or why should not a *Gospel Preacher* be in season? Some like words and practices because of custome; others have no other reason for their dislike. Never walke by what hath been done, or what is done, unless it be what ought to be done. Reduce things to their primitive

*Ipse dixit*  
swaid all.

6 Principle  
custom,  
Christ  
call'd him-  
self truth,  
not custom  
\* Old  
truths may  
come new-  
ly to light,  
God is not  
tied to  
time, for  
the gift of  
Illumina-  
tion. Dr.  
Hall.



primitive Institution; and then see what God saith of them, as our Saviour told the Pharisees, *Matth. 23. 8.* Though *Moses* for the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your Wives, yet from the beginning it was not so.

Men do now a dayes by opinions, as many do by their cloaths; some will keep to their great Grandfathers habit and fashion: others as changeable as the *Moon*, think they are never in fashion, unless they be ever changing fashions. Some cannot like a *truth*, because 'tis not of ancient standing: others like it because it is of yesterday. Some can reverence none but *gray-hair'd* opinions, others like none but youthfull and *smooth-fac'd* ones. 'Tis true the \* *multitude of yeares* teacheth wisdom, and so may the \* *few of dayes*; 'tis *truth*, and nothing but the *truth*, and all the *truth*, which should have our esteem, whether it be old or young; whether the first-born of *time*, or the last.

\* Age.  
\* Youth.

### *The seventh Principle.*

7 *Principle, proper Arguments.*

7 In all discourses and disputations, use proper *Media* or arguments to prove your tenets by; bring not *Scripture* to your reason, but your reason to *Scripture*, or judge reason by reason, and *Scripture* by *Scripture*. *Moral* arguments are not fit and proper to prove *natural* Principles by, nor in many things *rational* Arguments to prove or disprove *Scripture* by. Prove spiritual things by spiritual Arguments, as the Apostle hints to us, *1 Cor. 2. 13.* which things also we speak, not in the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual; or judging



ing Spiritualls with Spiritualls. The Apostle did not borrow words or arguments from without, but fitted spiritual arguments to prove spiritual things. *Never draw Ecclesiastical conclusions from Political premisses.*

*The eighth Principle.*

8 Discourse not to cavil but to convince, or to be convinced. Many discourse and dispute more for *fashion* then *satisfaction*, and hence come so many *frictions*.

Many, yea too many, discourse and dispute to shew forth themselves more then truth; taking more care to shew what may be said, then what should be said: ever carping and making *objections*, when there needs none to be made.

8 Principle  
cavil not.

*The ninth Principle.*

9 When truth is spoken yeild to it; men think it a shame to submit and surrender themselves after they have so long and so stoutly stood in the defence of their opinion: and therefore though they be convinced that their tenet is at least suspicious, like so many Sophisters in the Schools, they study to evade by distinctions, rather then give glory to God in confessing their sin.

But *Christians*, 'tis no small conquest and victory that you obtain, when your self, error and darkness is overcome and captivated by truth. 'Tis an honour to be overcome by truth, but to overcome the truth is shame. *Plutarch* makes it a great discovery of proficiency in vertues, when a man doth not take it ill that he is confuted.

9 Principle  
yeild to  
truth.

The

*The tenth Principle,*

10 Principle  
practise  
together.

*10 When, and as far as you are convinced, practise. Go together as far as you can; what need you part till needs must? you can agree to preach, heare and pray together, though in other things you differ. I have seen such sweet success upon the prayers of Christians met together, who have differed in severall opinions, that I cannot but beseech Christians, that they would not forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is.*

Heb. 10.  
25.  
Phil. 3.  
15.

*Let us therefore Brethren, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule: and if is any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.*



**PART. II.**

More  
uniting  
Principles

*In the mean time, let us like Christians observe these ensuing Principles. They are as salve, and you may guess at the nature of our wounds by them. I shall leave the application of them to the blessing of God.*

1 Principle,  
for-  
bearance.

**L***et us bear with one another, and forbear one another in love: We are commanded to bear one anothers burdens, Gal. 6. 2. That so we may fulfil the Law of Christ; and we shall undoubtedly be commended: for 'tis according to the good will of Christ, if we bear one anothers*

thers burdens. I am confident 'tis a burden to many a soul that they are not in all things like minded unto their brethren; *Yea, 'tis not without some fear and trembling, that in any thing they disagree from so many worthy and gracious men that are otherwise minded.* Oh help to bear, or at least bear with the burden.

You cannot keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, unless you forbear one another in love, as appears most Plainly by their connexion, *Eph. 4.2, 5.* forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace: this endeavour for unity and peace will be lost, unless God who bears with us, teach us also to bear one with another:

*Take these Reasons for forbearance.*

1. *You all pretend, yea, I hope intend the same end: you profess one and the same design, viz. the advancement of the Gospel of Peace, and the Peace of the Gospel.* Should ye not therefore in relation to this end, rejoyce that Christ is preach't, though some should preach him out of envie, and on purpose to adde to your bonds; it was Pauls joy, *Phil. 1. 15. 16. 18.*

Reasons  
for for-  
bearance.  
1. the one-  
ness of  
your end.

Why, my dearly beloved, are ye Ephraim against Manasseh, and Manasseh against Ephraim, seeing both are for Judah? Oh that Ephraim might not envie Manasseh, nor Manasseh vex Ephraim any more. See that remarkable passage in *Mark 9. v. 38.* saith John, Master, we saw one casting out Devils in thy Name, and he followeth not us, and we forbid him, because he followed not us: *Christians,* is not this many a mans language? forbid him, silence him; out with him,

H down

down with him? why so? Why? because he followeth not us. But Jesus *forbad John to forbid him*; for *verse 39.* Jesus said, *forbid him not*; and he gives two reasons of it: First, no man which shall do a miracle in my name, can lightly speak evil of me. Secondly, *verse 40.* for he that is not against us, is on our part. *Christians,* can he be against you that is for Christ; what though he follow not you, he notwithstanding carries on Christs end: blessed God, *forbid this,* that we should *forbid* one another to do thy work.

2 Reason,  
You agree  
in the  
most and  
best.

2 You agree in the most and the best things. The Fundamentals, and essentials of Religion (in which you to whom I write do agree) are of far more worth, and therefore of far more concernment to engage you, then circumstantial and accidentals (the things in which you disagree) are to disengage you.

3 Reason  
consider  
your  
selves.

3 Consider, that your selves also, are men subject to the like infirmities with your Brethren, and subject to like passions, and have also your failings, aberrations; in many things we offend all; who is there that sinneth not, good Lord! if thou should'st be so soon angry with us, as we are one with another, who could stand? I beseech you to read this Scripture with all lowliness and meekness of mind. *Gal. 6. 1.* Brethren, if a man (or as the margin reads it, although a man) be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual, restore such an one, in the spirit of meekness; why so? considering thy self, lest thou also be tempted. If thou be tempted, that which thou findest fault with, may be thy fault.

*The second Principle.*

2 Until ye are agreed, have charitable thoughts, not hard and harsh censures, of each others walking. Judge it rather to be conscience than stubbornness, which ingageth men to walk in different courses; You would have others think so of you; why will not you think so of others? who would not think, but that to have every mans good will, to keep the love of relations, to enjoy their liberties, men would comply with any thing, were there not an awe upon their consciences? whence it may arise, I will not question.

2 Charity.

Love thinks no evil, viz. of others; as well as towards others. Love banishes the jealousies and suspicions, and so consequently censures.

1 Cor. 13. 5.

*The third Principle.*

3 Draw not away your love, when God drawes not his love, dare any man deny his love to that man, where God grants his love? If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be *Anathema Maranatha*. But is any man beloved and a lover of Christ? Oh take heed, deny him not your love. Let that of the spirit which appears in him, draw thine heart more towards him, then that of flesh which appears, take off thine heart from him.

3 Principle, love whom God loves. 1 Cor. 16. 22.

We many times take notice of that which will divide, and not of that which will unite. A small error was soon espied in certain pictures of *Apelles*, when a thousand excellent touches were not at all observed. One hour of Eclipse

causeth the Sunne to be more gazed on, then a thousand fair dayes. Those souldiers who followed *Casars* triumph, published his vices, but concealed his vertues. But dear *Christians*, let us rather say one to another, as *Queen Elizabeth* said to the Lord *Burleigh*, sit down my Lord, we make much of you, not for your bad leg, but for your good head. Let us make much of each other and sit down together, not because there is badness in the feet; but because there is goodness in the head and heart.

The fourth Principle.

4 Principle, censure not intentions

4 Censure no mans intention, till his practice, either words or works, discover his meaning. Many times by their fears, jealousies and suspicions, men create that in their hearts, which had never a place in the suspected parties imagination. *Jacob* was needlessly troubled, and causelessly afraid, of his brother *Esau*, when nothing gave him occasion to suspect his brother, but his own guiltie conscience, which told him he did deserve it: *Jacob* fears that he came to execute revenge, when he comes to welcome home his brother, and entertain him honourably.

Jealousie is as quick as *Martial Law*; arraignes, condemns, and executes all in a moment.

\* Mistakes of things cause things to be done amiss.

\* Nothing doth more hurt and wrong to friends then jealousies. Some cry out of some, these men intend nothing but *Anarchy* and confusion, so that shortly there will be no difference of (nor respect to) persons. Others cry out of others, these men intend nothing but *Lordship* and

and tyranny, to encroach all power into their own hands; and so to be masters over our faith, and to lord it over the Lords inheritance. But Why are ye become evil judges of thoughts? are you the searchers of hearts? you would judge more righteous judgement in this, to judge according to appearance.

*The fifth Principle.*

5 Do nothing whereby to incense and exasperate another. Provoke one another to love, as much as you can, but to wrath, as little as you may: nay, not at all. 'Tis becoming Christians to use soft words, and they turn away wrath: but many words stir up strife. Bitter words are like sharp swords, they pierce to the very soul. But let it others passion provoke your compassion. 'Twas sweetly said of Calvin concerning Luther. Though he call me Devil, I will call him Saint. Oh that Christians would learn that lesson of Christ, When you are reviled, revile not again!

Alas! do not men speak bitterly against bitter speaking, and write bitterly against bitter writings, becoming inexcusable thereby? for wherein they judge others they condemn themselves, being doers of the same things. Oh that Christians would overcome evil with good, passion with meekness, bitterness with sweetness, for a soft tongue breaks the bone, Prov. 25. 19. Oh how did Abigails affection conquer Davids passion, though heated seven fold! And how did Davids kindness to Saul, make Saul confess his unkindness to David! However others carry themselves toward us, unbecoming Christians,

5 P rinci-  
ple,  
Incense  
not.

Prov. 13.  
1.

Rom. 2.1.



our carriage toward them should be no other than is becoming Christians.

A Publican will love where he finds love, and salute when he is saluted : but you (*ah you Christians!*) are to exceed and excell in love : to love when you are not loved, ( *though the more you love, the less ye be beloved*) to speak fair when you are ill spoken of, not to render railing, for railing but contrariwise blessing, you are thereunto called.

1 Pet. 3. 8.

2 Pet. 2. 11.

Christians should be as the Angels, which are greater in power and might, yet bring no railing accusations before the Lord : Michael the Archangel disputing with the Devil about the body of Moses, durst not bring (*heark ye Christians,*) he durst not bring a railing accusation, but said, *The Lord rebuke thee.* Let us do for the future, as Johns Disciples did by their Master, when Herod slew him, Matth. 14. 12. they took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus. Let us bury in oblivion all railings and injuries, *onely go and tell Jesus, and say, Lord rebuke them.*

### The sixth Principle.

6 Principle.

6 Go not about to make one another odious by representing things worse than they are. Many times the picture of the Lion is more dreadful than the Lion himself. Good Lord ! in what black, ugly and deformed shapes, doe men set forth one another, as if they were monsters and no men ?

Ab—————

————— Pudetque referre,

Ha



*Hac dici potuisse, & non potuisse refelli.*

Ab

*I blush to tell it,  
That I can speak it,  
But cannot refell it.*

Tertullus never strained his Oratory against Paul, nor Tobias and Sanballat theirs against Nehemiah, more then Christians (if at least they be as they are called) doe strain theirs to bring one another under disrespect and odium.

*The seventh Principle.*

7 Draw not conclusions from other mens Principles, and then say they are their opinions. We may make the same complaint as David, they wrest, torture and rack my words. Alas! men set every thing on the tenter hooks, stretch and twist every Principle like a nose of wax.

7 Principle.

Psal. 56. 5.

Alas! What pity 'tis to see men invert and pervert one anothers words and at length to draw such conclusions as would make one think they mean what they never meant? 'Twere a good thing to interpret candidly, and when a thing will bear a double construction, to take it in the best sense. But we see by sad experience, that Sophistry makes more Syllogismes then Logick doth.

So some mistook and misreported Paul, Rom. 8. 8. as if he had said, that we might do evil, so good might come thereof. So the Jews depose, that Christ said he would destroy the Temple at Jerusalem in three dayes and raise it again, when he spake of his Body, as appears John 2, 21. what words thus wrested and perverted may not be

Mat. 26. 61.

Joh. 2. 21.

heresie and ( as they said of Christ's words )  
 Blasphemy? when if taken as meant, and in  
 their proper sence, may be found very sound and  
 consonant to truth. Take heed therefore of glossing  
 or commenting upon another Text.

### The eighth Principle.

8 Princi-  
 ple, do as  
 you would  
 be done to

8 Grant to others what you would have others  
 grant to you. We are usually better at receiving  
 then at giving; we care not how much we re-  
 ceive, nor how little we give, though it be more  
 honourable to give then to receive; when our  
 selves are inferiours and others superiours; we  
 beg ( as did the servant, Mat. 18. 26. ) Have pa-  
 tience a little, have a little patience; but when  
 our selves are superiours, and others inferiours,  
 we have no patience at all.

Jesus Christ sums up the Law and the Pro-  
 phets in this Principle; [Mat. 7. 12.] Therefore  
 all things whatsoever ye would that man should  
 do to you, doe ye even so to them. This is all  
 that the Law, viz. Love thy neighbour as thy self,  
 doth require, and the doing of it is the fulfil-  
 ling of the Law. 'Tis indeed a golden rule, a  
 royall Law, the standard of equitie, according to  
 which we must converse with all men.

Job 16. 5. Ah Christians ! did we make other mens ca-  
 ses our own, we should say the case is altered.  
 Job pleads thus with his friends, I could also  
 speak as you, if your soul were in my souls stead,  
 I could heap up words against you, and shake  
 my head at you; But I would strengthen you  
 with my mouth, and the moving of my lips  
 should assuage your grief.

Many a great Commander have upon this very

con-

consideration shew themselves exceeding mercifull and kind to their captive, considering it might be their own case, and then they would be glad of mercy. And indeed victorie to generous minds is onely an inducement to Moderation.

See how Adonibezek's conscience flies in his face for his crueltie, when he himself was served by others as he had served others, *Judg. I. 7.* And Adonibezek said, *Threescore and ten Kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table; as I have done, so God hath requited me.*

*The ninth Principle.*

9 Do nothing in prejudice or partiality; the one will make you an enemy to good, the other will make you a friend to evil. Prejudice will take in nothing, partialitie will take in any thing.

9 Principle, no prejudice nor partialitie.

*Alas!* such is our misery, that men part Religion, and love by parties. Men love not (as God loves) without respect of persons; but men love such, because they take part with them and their designs; and have prejudice against others, because they are not their followers.

Till we love one another, according as Christ hath given us Command and example, as he hath loved us, that is, *as his*, we cannot expect so sweet a concord, as then we may.

*The tenth Principle.*

10 Ascend or descend, go higher or lower, do any thing (Sinne excepted) that you may agree. Become all things to all men, if at last by any means

10 Principle.

I Cor. 10.  
24.

means you may win some. No such way to win one anothers love, as by denying our selves to seek one anothers wealth.

Nature is so in love with unitie, that Particular beings will forsake their own interests, their elements and centres which are their rest and happiness, rather then there should be a breach or vacuitie in nature; and 'tis but reason that particulars should serve the universal, [for they who so lose, shall save] seeing that unless the vessel be preserved their Cabins cannot.

Alas Christians! how will ye thus seek every man his own, and not the things of Jesus Christ? Oh how glad am I! my joy is now fulfilled, saith John, at Christs increase, though his increase be my decrease; and Paul would rather starve himself, and never eat flesh while he lived, then do any thing which should offend or sadden his weak Brother.

Bodies ductile and tensile (metals that will be drawn into wires; wooll and tow, which will be drawn into yarn or thread) have in them the appetite of not discontinuing so strong, that they will follow the force which wire drawes and pulls them out, rather then discontinue or forsake their own bodies.

Gratificlea the mother of Cleomenes (when he was loth to send her for a pledge into Egypt) said unto him; come, come, put me into a ship, and send me whither thou wilt, that this body of mine may doe some good to my Countrey, before crooked age consume my life without profit.

Oh that there were such a heart in us, but to lay aside our own particular relations and interests, that there may not be so many a breach  
in

in the publikes, let us be weak with the weak, as well as strong with the strong, that we may make up breaches.

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PART. III.

For a further help to unitie, I shall lay down some other Principles, to unite our judgements; and submit them to the judgement of the Saints, whether they speak according to God or no.

*The first Principle.*

I **S**Eeing there is nothing to be practised, believed or taught, which is not agreeable to the mind of God, Let us make the Word of God our Judge. 1 Principle, make Scripture judge.

The Scriptures (as is granted by all that I write to) are the touchstone by which all religious Principles and Acts are to be tried. To the Law, and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this rule, 'tis because there is no light in them. *Isa. 8. 20.* Let nothing pass for current coin, which hath not this stamp upon it.

Certainly, no Christian will refuse to make the truth of God, contained in the Scriptures, the judge of all he holds and practiseth, it being the basis of both, if they be laid on their true foundation; 'tis the trial which tries all; and therefore bring your opinions to the light, to see whether they be of God or no.

If the Scriptures write *jus divinum*, divine right upon any opinion, 'tis then authentick; but all other authoritie is not sufficient to command

mand either Faith or Practice. The Bereans, [A<sup>8</sup>. 17. 11.] were call'd more noble then they of *Theſſalonica*; because they did not take things upon trust, and believe *implicitly*, but searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so. If any man, or an *Angel from Heaven*, bring you any other Doctrine, let him be accursed, *Gal.* 1. 8.

Certainly, these are the undoubted, perfect, and infallible rules for all matters of Faith and Practice, or God could not judge the world by them at the last day.

Let us do therefore, as the wise men, when they saw the *Star*, go up to *Jerusalem*, that is, to the Law and to the Testimony, and willingly acquiesce in the Answer we receive from the Oracles of God.

### *The second Principle.*

2 Principle; right understanding of Scriptures.

Three helps to understand Scripture.

1 The Spirit.  
Jam. 1. 5.  
Luk. 11. 12

2<sup>d</sup> Labour for a right understanding of Scripture; for the want of this makes all our differences; we erre, not knowing the Scriptures: Every one indeed brings Scripture. but most bring their own, not the Scriptures own sense, for their opinions.

*For a right understanding of Scripture, take these three courses*

First, Consult with the spirit of God. None knoweth the mind of God, but the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. 2. 11. The *Philistians* by plowing with *Sampsons* heifer, came to know his riddle. If any therefore want wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not; yet he giveth the spirit to them that ask him.

Secondly

Secondly, *Consult with the Saints*; for the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant, [ *Psalms* 25.14. ] Converse with them who converse with God. The Saints have clearer apprehensions of the Scripture then other men; and can give a better account of the Myserie (not so perhaps of the Historie) then many a learned man can do: the reason is apparent, for the godly man, though illiterate, hath the Law in his heart, and the truth in his inward parts; The Bible is transcrib'd within him. But the most learned man in the world (if not a Saint) hath it not in the experience, though he have it in the expression.

Not beloved, that I speak in dislike of learning and its use; no, I do confess that next to the Lord Jesus Christ, and Communion with God in him, there is no portion (whether riches, honours or pleasures) like unto it, in my esteem. This by the way; now to our purpose.

Prov. 24.6

It is good therefore to consult with the Saints, a conjunction of Counsellors will doe well, for in the multitude of them there is like to be safetie. *Prov.* 11.14. As to depend onely on other mens judgement, were to make as if the spirit had not come to thy self; so to depend onely on thy own judgement, were to make as if the spirit of God had not come to others.

Thirdly, *Use such helps as God hath made* usefull to others for their right understanding of Scripture.

Such as God hath made usefull to me and many other Christians, I shall set before you; I speak as to wise men, judge ye what I say.

Three o-  
ther rules.  
Rules for  
the under-  
standing  
of the  
Scripture.

The



## The first Rule.

The first  
Rule.

1 That the *Father, Son and Spirit*; as they are one, so they agree in one, *Ioh 5. 7, 8.* they have but one design. The *Father, Son and Spirit* are not like the gods of the heathen; (*which indeed are not gods*) alwayes quarrelling one with another, clashing against, and contradicting one another: though they will many things their will is but one.

Therefore if you find in Scripture, that the *Sons* design in Redemption, seems to be of larger extent, then the *Fathers* in Election, and the *Spirits* in Sanctification, reconcile it by this rule, for there is but one and the same object of the *Fathers Election*, the *Sons Redemption*, and the *Spirits Sanctification* to eternall life.

## The second Rule.

Second  
Rule.

2 Every particular is to be interpreted by the scope of the whole, and that will free Scriptures from all seeming contradictions.

\* *Xoigis*

*Paul* saith, *Rom. 3. 28.* a man is justified by Faith, without (\* or apart from) the deeds of the Law: but *Iam. 2. 24.* Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by Faith onely, \* or alone.

\* *Moroy.*

Now here seems to be a contradiction; but the scope of the Scriptures will untie this knot (as I understand) thus: By Faith alone we are justified, but the Faith, by which we are justified is not alone; 'Tis not (as I conceive) the work Faith, nor the works of Faith, but a working Faith whereby we are justified.

By



By Faith the person is justified, and by works, the Faith is justified, and thus beloved (I hope) you see clearly, that there is not *concordia discors* a disagreeing agreement, but *discordia concors*, an agreeing disagreement, between these two Scriptures.

One saith (to this our purpose) that to hang on any word or phrase in a Text and neglect the scope, favours of an Hereticall disposition. And Luther hath a sweet saying to this purpose, *Grammaticam decet Theologia cedere, quum subiecta sunt verba rebus, non res verbis: vox merito sensum sequatur & litera spiritum*. The sense in short is this; Words must give place to the matter and sence: His reason is this, because matter, is not for the words, but the words for the matter. And again, Divinely, *Iste modus intelligendi aut interpretandi Scripturas diversa scilicet ex diversis locis decerpere, est fallacissimus; habenda igitur est tota Scriptura, ante oculos & contraria contrariis conferenda*. That way of understanding or interpreting Scriptures, viz. to gather divers things from divers places, is most deceitfull; the whole Scripture therefore is to be had before our eyes, and contraries to be compared with contraries.

Friends, I hope it will not be an offence to any to quote an Author; for I believe, 'Tis as lawfull to consult with the experience of dead as living Saints.

### The third Rule.

3 The place is not truly interpreted, nor consequence well infer'd, the consequence whereof is an absurditie, and speaks any thing to the disparagement

3 Rule.

agement of the God of grace, or the grace of God, as Luther, (*Divine Luther*) *Omnia Scriptura est pro Christo interpretanda, ex. gr. Serva mandata, scil. in Christo, quia sine Christo nihil potestis* : All Scripture is to be interpreted for Christ ; as, keep the Commandements, viz. in Christ, for without him ye can do nothing.

And again, fully excellent and excellently full: *Si adversarii urgent Scripturam contra Christum, urgeamus Christum contra Scripturam*. If our adversaries urge Scripture against Christ, let us urge Christ against Scripture.

If the interpretation of any Text draw such inferences after it as these, viz. *That God is unjust; that God is mutable ; that God cannot doe all things; that Christ is not able of and by himself to save to the utmost, that the Saints shall not be kept through Faith by the power of God to salvation; I say, if such inferences follow the interpretation of any Scripture, 'tis not truly interpreted, for they cannot speak against the truth, but for the truth.*

#### The fourth Rule.

#### 4 Rule.

4 Take heed of distinctions; though there may be use of them, yet for the most part, the most part of distinctions arise from darkness and ignorance, or from wilfulness. Therefore take heed of them, and admit not of any which are not well grounded on the Scripture. Did we speak more punctually to all points, and more distinctly, there would be fewer distinctions.

It is a common thing with many men, that cannot

cannot or will not (Oh that there were not such as will not) understand the truth, to raise distinctions and evade that way. When men know not what to say, then like Sophisters they cry distinguish, we must distinguish. And then Materialiter and formaliter, strictè and latè (poor thread-bare terms) are tossed up and down like Tennis Balls.

*The first Rule.*

5. Parables and similitudes hold not in the particulars; but in the whole; not in every sentence, but in the scope. 5: Rule.

They run not on all four, as we say; they are of more use, for Illustration then Demonstration. And I believe there is not a truth held out in a parable, but its held forth also in some other place of Scripture, which will be better to ground on, being usually more clear.

*The sixth Rule.*

6. Seeing God in Scripture speaks much in a little, interpret Scripture in the largest sense. 6. Rule. The Hebrew Doctors say that the Law hath seventy

The Evangelists look upon severall Texts as fulfilled in their dayes, which were fulfilled long before; as Matth. 3. 17. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the Prophet Jeremiah, saying, &c. Now this was fulfilled Literally in Jeremy 31. 13. When Ephraim and ap-  
I (which plyed

In the New Testament the Apostles bring the same testimony to divers purposes.

(which came from Rachel) was in captivity, and fulfilled here by allusion; as much as if it had been said, we may now take up the words of the Prophet; as if that place was not fulfill'd till now. And so you shall often find severall Texts upon severall occasions applyed to severall uses; which shews, that the sense should not be confined. As for instance, that Text [*Hab. 2. 4. The just shall live by faith*] is applied in severall senses, as appears by comparing it with *Ro. 1. 7. Gal. 3. 11. Heb. 10. 38.* in all which places 'tis quoted.

*The seventh Rule.*

7. Rule.

7. No place must be interpreted so as to make the two Commandements, *love your Neighbour*, to prejudice each other. As the Proverb is, *we must not rob Peter to cloath Paul*; We may not take from God, to give to our Neighbour, nor take from our Neighbour, to give to God.

Mark. 7. 11

As *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*: now we must not under pretence of honouring our Parents dishonour God; no, 'tis obedience to disobey them, wherein we cannot obey them, unlesse we disobey God. Neither may we under pretence of *Corban* or a gift, refuse to do ought for our Father and Mother, as God commands us, lest we make the word of God of none effect.

*The eighth Rule.*

8. Rule.

8. Distinguish between things spoken properly, and things spoken figuratively, as also between things meant literally, and things meant spi-

spiritually. The Prophet *Malachi* said, *Mal.* 4. 5. that *Elias* must first come, which was spoken of *John the Baptist*, as *Christ* clears it; *Mat.* 17. 12. So these words *Mat.* 16. 6. Beware of the leaven of the *Pharisees*, are not meant properly, but figuratively.

If a man should take that place [ *Mat.* 5. 29. If thine eye offend thee, pull it out ] literally, he might be guilty of self murder. Therefore it is to be understood spiritually; viz. of any thing that is as near, dear and tender as our eye to us. *Origen*, who interpreted all, or almost all other places of Scripture mystically, understood this place literally [ *Mat.* 19. 12. Some make themselves Eunuches for the Kingdome of God ] and thereupon gelded himself: but surely *Origen*, had not that *ab origine*; for from the beginning it was not so; it was not instituted by God; therefore must not be executed by man.

*The ninth Rule.*

All places which speak of Administrations and Administrators, are best understood and interpreted, the nearer the sense comes to Gods design. Gods design is, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12, 13. by all Administrators and Administrations to bring about the perfecting of the Saints, the work of the Ministry, and the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come, &c. Now all Administrations and Administrators being to help on this, the places of Scripture speaking of such things, are undoubtedly best understood in the sense which doth promote that work.

9. Rule.

## 10. Rule.

10. *If Scripture speak it, believe it, though Reason cannot find out the reason of it.* The Scripture saith in Job 26. 7. That the earth hangeth on nothing. The Scripture saith, that one is three, and three are one, 1 Job. 5. 7. *How can reason think this true?* and yet 'tis true; for God who is truth, and speaks nothing but truth, saith 'tis so.

Yea, let me adde, that could God be comprehended by our reason, we might think it reason to think he were not God.

*The third Principle.*

## 3. Principle.

3. *If after all these endeavours, to attain and obtain the right understanding of Scripture, they yet seem in any particular to speak darkly: and as to externall dispensations, thou knowst not with which to close, make holinesse thy Rule.*

That way wch conduceth most to self abasing and Christs advancement, is the safest: and did Christians judge of opinions and practices by this Rule, they would better discern between things that differ.

You hear men say *this is Christ*, and here is *Christ*, and both may seem probable to you; but you know not how to determine: there are strong arguments on both hands. Now consider and in good earnest weigh, and that without partiality, which makes most for an exact walking with God, and building up one another in the faith and fear of Jesus Christ, and accordingly engage.

*The fourth Principle.*

## 4. Principle.

4. *Make not that common to all, which God hath made peculiar to some; nor make that peculiar*

to some, which God hath made common to all; do not ye enlarge when God hath straitned nor straiten when God hath enlarged. Cast not Pearls before Swine, nor give the Childrens Bread to Dogs: neither refuse to give the children bread, and deny not Pearles to them whom God hath made his Jewels.

Give every one his due; tribute to whom tribute, love to whom love, honour to whom honour. Be not you shy of joyning your selves when God will joyn himself; lest you call that common and unclean which God hath sanctified; be sure also to make a difference between the precious and the vile; then God will make you Jer. 15.20 unto this people a fenced brazen wall, and though they fight against you, they shall not prevaile; for the Lord will be with you.

### The fifth Principle.

5. Confine not God to any, nor deny to God any way of working; know this, that he worketh, when, where, how, and by whom he pleaseth: because the first Gospel Ministry was with miracles, can there be none now without miracles? why will ye limit the holy one of Israel? 5. Principle.

If he bring about his end, that is, by the Gospel to bring in poor sinners to himself, what matters it whether it be done by the work of his hand, or by the word of his mouth?

And yet who knows but God who did; will again appear in working miracles; especially at the calling in of the Jewes, as he did then at the calling of the Gentiles. But whether he will or no, let not us limit the holy one of Israel.



## The sixth Principle.

6. Principle.

6. Do not divorce what God hath married, nor separate what God hath joyned together. The fulfilling of the righteousness of the Law without us, doth not hinder the fulfilling of it within us; nor the fulfilling of the righteousness of the Law in us, deny the fulfilling of the Law without us.

\* Yea that reject.

Why should some (like the Corinthians) cry up Paul, and Apollo, and Cephas, and neglect Christ? and others cry up Christ, and neglect \* Paul and Apollo? surely Paul, Apollo, Cephas, and Christ are very good friends. Christ is not included in Paul, nor excluded from Paul; but is within him, and without him.

Some cry up Christ in the flesh, others Christ in the spirit, but Beloved, is Christ divided? surely Christ in the flesh and Christ in the spirit, do not oppose one another; why then should any oppose them one to another?

Some are altogether for the Letter, others for the Spirit and meaning of the word; Beloved, why should ye not be for both in one, seeing they agree in one? Letter and spirit, Word and meaning, do not disagree nor crosse one another. The lesson when the Scholar hath learned it by heart, doth not differ from that in the book, they are still one and the same lesson.

The Word is the meaning exprest, the meaning is the Word explained. Onely let me adde, that though the word includes the meaning fully, yet it doth not fully expresse the meaning, as appears by Christs exposition of the Law, Mat. 5.

Some look but little to the outward conversation, as if all Religion consisted in an inward retirement and contemplation; others look as little



little to the *inward*, as if all Religion were in the *outward man*: but Beloved, the inward and outward man make but *one man*, the inward and outward conversation but *one conformity* to the Will of God. *He doth not enjoy much of God within, who walks not much with God without: nor doth he walk much with God without, who enjoys not much of God within.*

*The seventh Principle.*

7. *Whatever was either rule or privilege under the Law, is still so under the Gospel, unlesse we can shew its abrogation.* What was once discovered to be the will of God, continues to be so till he himself do disanull it. We see indeed that many things are revoked, and though they were once his will, are his will no longer: for God doth not speak the word because the word is right, but the word is right because God speaks it.

7. Principle.

Let us not therefore think that the *Old Testaments* authority is not proof sufficient, surely as far as I understand, his will there, is not abrogated in the *New Testament*, but abides still in its full force.

*The eighth Principle.*

8. *Use sweetnesse rather then violence, words rather then swords to convince one another; use verba rather then verbera; Argumenta Aristotelica, rather then Bacillina; rational Arguments, rather then club Law, to win upon each other.*

8. Principle.

Certainly, if reason and Scripture wil not prevail, imprisonment, &c. are not like to do it. I am sure the first is more suitable to man, who

## *The New Command renewed :*

cares not to be bound but with the cords of a man viz. love; cords may binde up his hands that he cannot hurt, but love binds up his heart that he will not hurt.

A Cart may break yce, but it doth abide yce still, but the Sun doth melt it out of it self.

I beseech you *Beloved*, let us rather pray one for another, then make a prey one of another: if Christ come, and find us bearing our fellow-servants, how, ah how shall we look him in the face? Oh that every one that reads, would ask his heart concerning every Rule, & Principle, how far it doth concern himself, and not put off, as if others, and not himself, were spoken to.

Consider what hath been said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things.

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Try all things, hold fast that which is good.

## PART. IV.

*I shall adde some Arguments to provoke us to mutual love.*

The first provoking Argument.

1. Argument.

1. **T**Is the will and command of the Lord Jesus Christ that we love one another. And oh with what willingnesse shuld Christians embrace the will of Christ? Certainly if his command be grievous to us, the love of God is not in us, 1 John 5. 3.

Alas! how little is love your enemies observed, when love one another is so little regarded! Surely you would have been loth to have dealt so unkindly with a dead friend as not to observe

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observe his last Will and Testament; and will ye deal thus with Christ? are these the effects, of your affection? How can you prove what you profess, that you are his friends, when he saith, John 13. 14. ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you? never talk of friendship unlesse you obey him.

Read over that place (not overly, but seriously) 1 John 4. 20. If a man say I love God and hate his Brother, he is a liar. Do ye see this Christians? Who speaks truth? God or you? You say you love God; God saith you lie, for you love not one another.

Mean ye to mock God, when ye call upon him and pray, thy will be done? is not this his will, that ye love one another? what would you have God say Amen, and you will not say so be it?

*The second provoking Argument.*

Secondly, We have Christ for an example; he lived and loved as well as suffered and died, leaving us an example. This is all we have to do in the world, to shew forth the vertues of Christ, and to walk as we have him for an example. We write not after our copy, unlesse we live and love as Christ did.

2. Argument.

See that remarkable inference, 1 John 4. v. 10, 11. Herein is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins, v. 11. He draws this inference, If God so loved us, what then? must we love God again? nay that is not all, but how ought we to love one another, God having given us such an example?

Christ

Abrahams  
children,  
Sons of i-  
mitation.

Christ told the Jewes, \* that if they had made Abraham their example, they would do as Abraham did; and surely did we propose Christ for our example, we should walk as Christ. If a Painter tell me he is about to draw the Picture of a man, and it prove to be like a beast, I shall hardly believe that he had the Idea of a man as an example in his fancy.

Surely, while the products and results of our undertakings be so brutish and diabolical; how can any man think that we have Christ as a pattern, unless they judge Christ by us to be according to us, viz. malicious and envious as we are?

Ah my Brethren! tender the honour of Christ more; he hath told the world that they may read him in you, and your obedience to his commands will give all the world to understand that ye are his Disciples; alas, what will men think of Christ, when they see his Disciples walk in strife and bitter envyings.

You are his Epistle to be known and read of all men; and if the copy contain such bitter things, will they not think that the original contains the same? Ah Beloved! why do you bring up an evil report upon the Lord Jesus?

When the streams are bitter, will any think the fountain sweet? The Academicks, the Peripatericks, the Stoicks and Epicureans, and all the sects of the Philosophers, were more careful to follow their leaders, then Christians are to follow Christ.

But as Alexander said to a cowardly soldier of his called Alexander, Leave off thy name, or fight better; never call your selves Christians and pretend to walk as you have Christ for

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an example, unlesse men may read that in you,  
which was read in Christ, viz. love.

*The third provoking Argument.*

Thirdly, *Love is debt.* You owe love, and should owe nothing else to one another. 3. Argu-  
Christians, will ye not be honest men and pay ment.  
your debt? Rom. 13. 8, 9, 10. when you love Aut hoc  
one another, you fulfill the Law, and pay your non est  
debt. Evange-

Is it not strange that Christians should be such Antinomians? this is Christs Law, Love one another; now you are Antinomians if ye love not one another; certainly a man that is for love is no Antinomian; for the Law is fulfilled in this one word, viz. Love. Look to it Christians, you will never be out of the danger of being arrested one by another, till you pay your debt, and love one another. lium, aut  
nos non sumus Evan-  
gelci.

*The fourth provoking Argument.*

Fourthly, *Your union and communion one with another, your loving one of another, will remove the scandals which your divisions bring upon the truth of God.* There is no such stumbling block which causeth the world to waver the way of God, as the division of Saints. 4. Argu-  
ment.

It is bad like (saith the world) that they can reach us the truth, when they cannot agree about it themselves. Blessed God! what a reproach is this? Oh that this should be published in Ashalon, and spoken in Gath!

Christians would it not make you blush, if you should hear poor souls (as I have heard (the

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(the Lord knows) with a sorry heart) come and tell you, that there is *nothing* keeps them so much in doubt, *nothing* fills them so full of fears, as the *division of Saints*.

Alas saith a poor soul, my soul is in a strait between two, and what to do I know not; one tels me this is *Scylla*, another tels me that's *Charibdis*; one tels me that in that way there is a *Lion*, another tels me that if I lean on that wall a *Serpent* will bite me, and this saith the poor soul even rends my heart to pieces.

*Ah Christians!* let the sighing of these poor Babes and Infant souls, prevail with you; yea, let them, who as yet are unborn (being not new born) see your sweet and loving conversation, that they may be won by it.

*The fifth provoking Argument.*

5. Argument.

Fifthly, Your living in love will midwife into the World, that long lookt, and longed for man child of Reformation, with which we travel in birth, to this very day.

Alas! we are like *Jacob* and *Esau*, struggling in the wombe for priority and Eldership, and so prove our selves foolish children by standing in the way of breaking forth. Every body cries out, where is the Reformation? you promised us a Reformation; ah, will ye not lay it to heart? undoubtedly had you not fallen out about the way, you had come to your journeys end long since.

Nothing retards and hinders publick motion, so much as division; when one goes this way, another that, 'Tis spoken to the everlasting praise of

*The New Command renewed :*

of Israel, *Judg. 18. 1.* they were gathered together *as one man.* And *ver. 8.* All the people arose *as one man.* So *Exra. 3. 1.* The people gathered together *as one man.* *Nehe. 8. 1.* And all the people gathered together *as one man.*

Had they been divided, how had the work gone on? *Christians,* shall Israel *in the flesh* be as one man, and shall not Israel *in the spirit*? were they so zealous for the *Type*, and shall not we for the *Antitype*? yea for the *shadow*, and shall not we for the *body*? as you love publick settlement and safety, love one another.

*The sixth provoking Argument.*

6. *Union and love will preserve you, but division and envy will be your ruine, Gal. 5. 15.* But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed ye be not consumed one of another.

*What! are Christians become like Millstones, which having no grist to grinde, set themselves on fire? that the world should hate you, and seek your ruine is no wonder; but that your selves should hate one another, 'tis monstrous. Was it ever known that any hated his own flesh? you are flesh of flesh, and bone of bone, yea of one spirit with Jesus Christ. Oh if you were but sensible, how sensible Jesus Christ is hereof! Think ye that it pains him not to have his members thus disjoynted? surely he cries out, I am wounded, yea my friends wound me.*

*What! Brethren sheath their swords in each others bowels! Will ye bring that ruine upon your selves which the Devill and his agents have attempted, but in vain? Will ye pull out one anothers eyes to make the Philistines sport?*



*The New Command renewed :*

*Ab take heed, lest whilst you fall out among your selves, a common enemy fall in upon you and end the controversie, by both your ends. Surely the world hug themselves in these hopes; and the Saints shrugge for these fears.*

When Agamemnon and Achilles were fallen out, Homer brings in Nestor perswading them to reconciliation from these two arguments.

Μὴ γὰρ πῶς Ἀχαιοὶ γὰρ ἰκῶν,  
ἔκιν γυνήσσι Πριάμοις Πριάμοισι παῖδες.

*Alas ! great sadnesse will the Greeks possesse ;  
Priams and Trojans joy will be no lesse.*

The world wisheth of you (as Tacitus of the Germans) if this people cannot love us, that they would hate one another : and will you give them their hearts desire ; must it again be said, *Thy perdition is of thy self, Oh Israel ! Oh England !*

'Tis said of the stone Scyrus, that while it is whole swims on the water, but being broken, it sinks. Christians, there is yet hope, that being whole and united in love, we may swim above all the waters that flow in upon us like mighty flouds, but if we break and divide, we are liketo sink, every Womans child of us. Many other Arguments may be used, but I hope a few words will be enough to the wise : onely these three to conclude with.

First, *The Beasts of the field are not onely at peace with us, but at peace among themselves : they especially who are of the same kind agree together, Sævis inter se convenit visis, the wilde*

*Or, Love one another.*

wild & savage bears agree among themselves.

*What? shall the Lion lye down with the Lamb, and the Leopard with the Kid, to teach Saints the way? The Oxe and the Asse have more knowledge then my People, said God of Israel, and may we not say of the Elephants and Stags, they have more love then Christians? they will help and support one another, but Christians*——

*Secondly, wicked men brethren in iniquity agree together, Luk. 23. 12. Look to it Christians. That very same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together, who before were at enmity among themselves. Can ye read this and not blush?*

*That very day that Christ was to be abased, enemies became friends, and at this day when Christ is to be advanced, friends become enemies. Christians where are your hearts?*

*Thirdly, the devils agree among themselves, and as I may say, love one another; though it be but a devilish love, Mar. 5. 3. from v. 22. to 27. mark it I beseech you, they will not cast out one another.*

*Do the Devils love their kingdom so well that they will not divide it? and doe ye love ours so ill, as to divide it and break it? will it not be bitternesse in the latter end? Mat. 12. 45. they go and call one another, and take possession and dwell there; What can Devils dwell together, and cannot Christians? Oh with what bleeding hearts should we think of this, that the children of Hell should be wiser in their Generations then the children of Heaven.*

*I shall conclude with that Scripture, Phil. 2. If therefore there be any consolation in Christ, If  
any*

any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same Love, being of one accord, of one minde: Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of minde, let each esteeme other better then himself; look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this minde be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.

Christians, I would I were able to expresse my self with more affection, in beseeching you to love one another; I beseech you, yea with beseechings I beseech you love one another. Could I but paint out before you the pantings of my heart, and set sighes before your sight, and draw a draught of the groans which these considerations draw from my heart. But-- All I will or can say is love, love, love. The love of God and the God of love constrain you to love one another: that it may at last be said of Christians as it was at first; behold how they love one another.

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**FINIS.**

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